

Underutilized food crops: treasure for the future India

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Underutilized crops are lesser-known plant species in terms of marketing and research, but well adapted to marginal and stress conditions. Their indigenous potential and ethnobotanical data are well known to people, whereas, commercial importance and market value is unknown to the public. The survey conducted and the indigenous data gathered gave information that, UUC's make Indian economy sounder and in many cases benefit the environment as well, by replacing the depleting resources with the new ones. In India, strategy development and appropriate policies are limited to a large extent because of the lack of authentic documentation on these crops. The Indian government policies and strategies for food security should take into account the diversity of underutilized crops. Although the options for scaling-up neglected crops for large-scale agriculture appear to be increasingly exhausted, many species have the potential to contribute to food security, nutrition, dietary and culinary diversification, health and income generation. Basically, these UUC's are multifold food crops as the treasures for the future India have greater potential for food and security, income generation and environmental services.

Key Words : Underutilized crops, Food security, Health benefits

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